

FIRST YEAR

TEXT BOOK



CHURCH HISTORY

A Historical Parallel to the
Seven Churches of Asia

DELIVERANCE BIBLE

Church History

A Historical Parallel to the Seven Churches of Asia

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Introduction to Church History

Jesus said: “upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” – Matthew 16:18. Jesus is talking to Peter, but Peter is not the rock foundation of the Church. JESUS IS THE ROCK UPON WHICH THE CHURCH IS BUILT! Jesus is the stone which the builder’s rejected, and the chief cornerstone.

Acts 4:11—*This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.*

This class will help the student to become familiar with the history of the Church. The goal of this class is to give you a practical understanding of events that occurred throughout the history of the Church. The Church of Jesus Christ is alive. We will study the lives of some of the people who have been used of God as pillars in the Church.

I. Definition of Church History

A. Church – the Greek word for church is *Ekklesia* which means *those called together or those called out.*

This class will study the true church of Jesus Christ. The word “church” is used today to refer to the **buildings** that the saints gather in to worship, but it more accurately refers to the **people**. The Scripture uses the word ‘church’ to refer to an assembly in a certain house or city. (Romans 16:5, I Cor. 16:19, Col. 4:15) The Church is more than a house or building, but is the saints who are the Body of Christ.

1. The Lord added to the Church.

Acts 2:47—*...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

After experiencing the great Baptism of the Holy Ghost in the Upper Room, the Disciples were powerfully influential in witnessing of Christ. In one day, 3,000 souls were saved and added to the local assembly. Every day, more and more were added!

2. Jesus is the head of the Church.

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Ephesians 1:22-23—*And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body...*

The Church is referred to in this Scripture as the body of Christ. Jesus is the head of His Body. In a physical body the head gives commands to the body to function and work. In the body of Christ, Jesus is the Commander who gives instructions to His Church to do the work of God.

3. The Church consists of Believers who have been baptized in the Holy Ghost.

I Corinthians 12:13—*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...*

According to Ephesians 1: 22,23, the Church is the Body of Christ. I Corinthians 12:13 tells us that we are baptized into the Body by the Holy Spirit. According to this Scripture, we understand that it takes the baptism or infilling of the Holy Ghost to do the work of God as part of the Body of Christ. In summary:

- a. We are saved by the Blood of Jesus Christ.
Col. 1:14—*In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.*
- b. A *physical* church is a local assembly of Believers who gather together for worship.
- c. Yet, according to I Corinthians 12:13, we need the Holy Ghost Baptism to be active in the *mystical* **Body/Church** of Christ.

This Church is not the physical one, but spiritual. We are born into the family of God and we are baptized by the Holy Ghost into the Body or Church of Christ. The Body or Church enjoys a deeper relationship with Christ than that of the family relationship when we are born of God.

4. The Church began on the day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:1—*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*

The Church was birthed by the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost. This class will include the study of the early Church of Acts up to our current Church period.

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B. History – the word history comes from a word that means learning by inquiry.

1. The Webster's dictionary defines history as: *that branch of knowledge which deals with events that have taken place in the world's existence; the study or investigation of the past.*

2. HIS STORY – The birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ is the central event of the history of the world. History is recorded around Christ; dates are listed as BC (before Christ) and AD (Anno Domini) which is Latin that means *in the year of our Lord*. All of history centers on Christ.

C. Christian – We are studying the history of the Christian Church.

The term Christian meaning *to be like Christ* or *one who follows Christ* was first used in Antioch around AD 40.

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II. Why Study Church History?

A. The study of Church history gives us an appreciation of our heritage. Many men and woman have paid the price of their lives to carry this Gospel message. The Gospel has been preached through much difficulty and hardship.

B. The repeat of history. History comes in cycles. By studying the past we can learn about the present. We can learn from the mistakes and successes of others. God is no respecter of persons. What God has performed for past generations He can do for our generation if we obey Him as they did.

Romans 2:11—*For there is no respect of persons with God.*

1. What God required of men yesterday; He will still require today. God deals with all men equally in all ages and at all times. How God dealt with men in times past is how He will still deal with men today. God has always required that men live a Holy life and he has not changed that standard today.

2. God uses ordinary people. The same God that used Peter, and James, and John is the same God that will use you. God uses ordinary people just like you.

C. To build up our faith.

1. Learn of the mighty revivals of the church. There have been some great manifestations of God's power throughout the course of the history of the church. The same Holy Ghost that moved in those revivals is the same Holy Ghost that will move today.

2. You can see that God's hand has always been on His Church.

D. To enrich the knowledge of the minister.

A minister of the Gospel should not be ignorant of the rich history of the Church. Seeing God at work in history can give us an understanding of how God works. God is in control of His Story. Nothing happens unless God wills it. Those that fight against the will of God cannot win. No devil in hell can stop the will and plan of God.

Daniel 2:21—*And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:*

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III. The Seven Periods of Church History

The history of the Church is divided into seven periods of time. These are not just man's divisions of Church history, but these are God's divisions that He has given to us in His Word. The Book of Revelation describes seven Churches in Asia.

Revelation 1:11—*Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.*

These seven Churches are described individually from Revelation 2:1 to Revelation 3:22. These seven Churches describe and parallel the seven periods of the history of the Church. They are a prophetic overview of the entire history of the church from the first century AD until the current period of time today. It is important to note that these periods do tend to overlap one another and elements from all the church periods can be found in each individual period. With this being said, each period has a distinct and dominant 'personality.'

The key to understanding the meaning of these seven Churches is to compare the events of the seven periods of the Church to the description given in the book of Revelation of these seven Churches. These chapters in the book of Revelation will be the key texts of this course. Each of these seven churches corresponds to a distinct period in history. As we begin to study each church description in the Bible and compare it to the events that took place in the history of that period, you will begin to understand how these seven churches represent seven distinct periods in the history of the Church. Each of these church names has a corresponding meaning. The meaning of the names describes that period as a whole.

The following is a list of the seven periods with their corresponding church name and the meaning of that name. There is also a description of events that mark the beginning and ending of the period with the corresponding dates. (You will not be required to memorize these dates; they are given for the benefit of your personal study.)

1. **THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH - *Ephesus* - "*desirable*"**
 - START: From the Day of Pentecost 30 AD
 - END: To the completion of the N.T. about 100 AD

The first period we will study is the Apostolic period which corresponds to the Ephesus church. The word Ephesus means

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desirable. Ephesus is referred to as the model church. Jesus gives words of encouragement and also instruction to each of the Churches. Jesus has many good things to say about this church. The description given by Jesus is very desirable. (Revelation 2:1-7) Jesus admonishes this Church that they have left their first love. The early Church lacked a missionary vision. There was no effort to go into the entire world and preach the Gospel. This Church period left their first love of the souls of men. God would allow persecution to come to cause the Believers to spread out and therefore result in a greater spread of the Gospel.

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2. THE PERSECUTED CHURCH - *Smyrna* - “*crushed*”

- START: From the completion of the N.T. about 100 AD
- END: To the Edict of Constantine 313 AD

The Persecuted period corresponds to the Smyrna Church. The word Smyrna means crushed. This is a period of tremendous persecution of the Church. The Church was **crushed** beneath the iron heel of the Roman Empire.

3. THE IMPERIAL CHURCH - *Pergamos* - “*married*”

- START: From the Edict of Constantine 313 AD
- END: To the Fall of Rome 476 AD

The word Imperial refers to a king or ruler. The Imperial period corresponds to the Pergamos Church. This was a period in the history of the Church that an emperor had much influence on the Church. The word Pergamos means *married*. This is a period of the beginning of compromise in the Church. The Church became married to paganism. The Church name describes the condition of compromise that prevailed during this period. This paganism would later become the Roman Catholic Church. We will not study the history of the Roman Catholic Church specifically, but we will look at how it affected the true Church.

4. THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH - *Thyatira* - “*continual sacrifice*”

- START: From the Fall of Rome 476 AD
- END: To the Fall of Constantinople 1453 AD

There are certain terms of history that will be used in this class. Medieval is a term used to describe the middle age of history which is also called the dark ages. The Medieval period corresponds to the Thyatira church. The word Thyatira means continual sacrifice. The Catholic church dominated Europe during this time. The phrase “continual sacrifice” describes the continual sacrifice of the Roman Catholic wafer during mass. The Catholics falsely teach that Jesus is sacrificed each week during the mass. Again, the meaning of the name Thyatira describes the prevailing factor of the period.

5. THE REFORMED CHURCH - *Sardis* - “*remnant*”

- START: From the Fall of Constantinople 1453 AD
- END: To the End of the Thirty Year War 1678 AD

The Reformed period corresponds to the Sardis Church. The word Sardis means remnant. There was still a remnant that was serving God. Jesus told them to strengthen the things that remain.

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This was a period when God used men like Martin Luther to stand up against the tide of Catholicism and preach the just shall live by faith. God raised up men throughout Europe to restore the Word to the Church. The Medieval period was a dark period. The world even refers to that period as the dark ages. God turned on the light. It took the light of the Word of God to bring Europe out of the dark ages.

6. THE MODERN CHURCH - *Philadelphia* - “brotherly love”

- START: From the end of the Thirty Year War 1678 AD
- END: To the Twentieth Century 1950's AD

The Modern period corresponds to the Philadelphia Church. The word Philadelphia means brotherly love. This was a period of great revivals and missionary outreach. Up until this time there was never a concentrated effort to reach the world with the Gospel. It takes a great love of souls to travel to a foreign land and preach the Gospel. It was during this time that David Livingstone set up many missionary stations on the continent of Africa.

7. THE LAODICEAN CHURCH - *Laodicea* - “rule by the people”

- START: From the Twentieth Century 1950's AD
- END: To the present day

We use the Biblical name of the Church to refer to this period. The word Laodicea means rule by the people. Today many churches are run by the people and not the pastors. Thus the description of the period is again described in the meaning of the name – rule by the people. Jesus described this church as being lukewarm. The condition of the church as a whole today is defiantly lukewarm.

Each of these seven churches prophetically describes a period that would come to the church. John received this revelation in AD 100. Today we are living in the Laodicean period. This is not just a study of dead facts and dates that have no meaning. We need to understand the Word of God. By understanding the meaning of these seven churches described in the Book of Revelation; we can understand that Jesus was referring to our day when He rebuked the Laodicean Church.

We will study each of these periods individually. This chapter was only an overview of what this course will cover.

1. THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH - *Ephesus* - *desirable*

2. THE PERSECUTED CHURCH - *Smyrna* - *crushed*

3. THE IMPERIAL CHURCH - *Pergamos* - *married*

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- 4. THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH - Thyatira - *continual sacrifice***
- 5. THE REFORMED CHURCH - Sardis - *remnant***
- 6. THE MODERN CHURCH - Philadelphia - *brotherly love***
- 7. THE LAODICEAN CHURCH - Laodicea - *rule by the laity/people***

One: The Apostolic Church

(AD 30-100) From The Day of Pentecost - To the completion of the New Testament

I. Ephesus means desirable. - Rev. 2:1-7

A. Jesus had many good things to say about this church.

B. They left their first love.

The loss of a love relationship with Jesus resulted in a loss of the love of the souls of men. There was no missionary effort. Jesus commissioned the Church to go into the entire world and preach the Gospel. The early church made no effort to evangelize the world.

C. They hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes.

Nicolaitanes refers to those who wanted to rule or conquer the laity. This comes from two Greek words *Niko* which means to conquer or overthrow and *Laos* which means the people or laity.

II. The Church's Enduement

A. They received power, after the Holy Ghost came upon them - Acts 1:8

B. The effects of the Holy Spirit

1. Illuminating - The Holy Spirit illuminated their minds to understand what they were not able to understand before - John 12:16, I Cor. 2:14

2. Empowering - The Holy Spirit empowered them to preach and to work miracles - Acts 4:22, 6:15

3. The Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost and will abide until the Church is raptured (As long as the Church is here the Holy Spirit will be here in the manner in which He came on the Day of Pentecost) - Acts 2:39

III. The Church's Original Location

The Church began in the city of Jerusalem, but persecution would soon scatter them abroad. (Acts 8:1)

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IV. The Church's membership

The original members were all Jews. They didn't yet understand that The Gospel was for the Gentiles, as well. (Acts 11:1-18)

V. The Church's Government

- A. The twelve Apostles as a body governed the Church.
- B. Peter was the spokesman - Acts 2:14, 38-42
- C. James became the presiding elder or pastor - Acts 12:17, 15:6-13, 21:18

VI. The Church's Doctrines

- A. Jesus was the Messiah - Acts 2:36
- B. The Resurrection of Christ - Acts 2:30-32
- C. The Return of Christ - Acts 1:9-11, I Thess. 4:15-17

VII. The Church's Defect

They lacked missionary vision, but persecution sent them forth - Acts 8:1

VIII. The Church's Expansion

A. Stephen's preaching

He was one of the seven chosen to care for the needs of the church. - Acts 6:8 He is described as a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost. He was used by God to do great wonders and miracles among the people. Stephen was the first Christian Martyr. - Acts 7:55-60

B. Saul's persecution

Saul was a leader in persecuting the Christians. - Acts 8:3 He was the one that consented to Stephen's death. The persecution helped to expand the church. - Acts 8:4

C. Philip's preaching

He established a church in Samaria - Acts 8:14-17 This church was recognized by the Apostles. This was the first church outside of Judaism. He also founded churches in Gaza, Joppa and Caesarea. - Acts 8:40

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D. Peter's preaching

Peter preached the Gospel in Cornelius' house. The Gentiles received the Holy Ghost while Peter was preaching. – Acts 10:44-48

E. Saul's conversion

Jesus confronted Saul on the road to Damascus. He became a powerful preacher to both Jews and Gentiles. – Acts 9:19-22 Saul's name was changed to Paul. Paul became the mighty Apostle to the Gentiles.

IX. The Church among the Gentiles

A. The Council at Jerusalem AD 48 – Acts 15:5-20

The Apostles called a council of elders together to settle the question of whether the Gentiles should keep the ceremonial Law of Moses. Some of the people were insisting that the Gentiles be circumcised. – verse 5 The council concluded that the ceremonial Law was not binding on the Gentiles.

B. The leaders of the Church – Gal. 2:9

1. **The Apostle Peter.** The Apostle Peter was the spokesman among the Apostles. He assisted James at the Jerusalem Church. History records Peter was martyred in Rome about AD 67.

2. **The Apostle Paul** (Rom. 11:13). Paul was called to be an Apostle. – Rom. 1:1 He was the Apostle to the Gentiles. He taught in the synagogues and received from the Holy Ghost much of the N.T. While a prisoner at Rome he wrote: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. History records Paul was martyred around AD 67.

3. **James** (Acts 15: 13-20). James was the younger brother of the Lord. He is not to be confused with the Apostle James who was killed by Herod in Acts 12. *And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.* – Acts 12:2 James was the presiding Elder or Pastor of the Jerusalem Church. He recognized the Gentiles as part of the Body of Christ. History records James was martyred around AD 62.

4. **The Missionary Journeys of Paul.** Paul took several missionary journeys to spread the Gospel. Paul established churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and Corinth. He formed the seven churches of Asia either directly or indirectly. – Acts 19:10 The churches were established though much suffering. – II Cor. 11:23-28

5. **The Apostle John.** John was the youngest of the Apostles. He arose as a leader after the death of the other original Apostles. John taught Ignatius and Polycarp who would become leaders of the

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Church. He received the Revelation of Jesus Christ while in exile on the isle of Patmos in AD 100. There is no accurate historical record of the death of John.

C. The Fall of Jerusalem - AD 70

1. The Jews broke out in rebellion against Roman rule in AD 66.
2. The Roman General Titus destroyed the city of Jerusalem.

The city caught on fire which caused the gold to melt between the bricks. Soldiers took apart the temple brick by brick to retrieve the gold. This event fulfilled the prophecy of Jesus concerning the temple.

Mark 13:2—*And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*

3. The animal sacrifices ceased when the temple was destroyed.
4. God was done with Judaism at that time.

Two: The Persecuted Church

(AD 100-313) From the completion of the NT to the Edict of Constantine.

This sets forth the period when the church was crushed beneath the iron heel of pagan Rome, yet it never gave out such sweet fragrance to God as in those two centuries of almost constant martyrdom. The Edict of Constantine was an official decree that ended the killing of Christians in the Roman Empire. Constantine will be further discussed in the Imperial Church Period.

I. Persecution and Smyrna

Smyrna means crushed. - It comes from the root word *myrrh*, the myrrh plant had to be crushed in order to emit its sweet fragrance. 2:8-11)

A. The Scripture describes: "tribulation and poverty".

This was an intense period of persecution of the church. Those who weren't killed were forced into hiding and endured poverty and hardship.

B. "the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. (2:9)

The Judiazers opposed the church. The Judiazers were those who wanted to revert back to the ceremonial law. Jesus exposes these false Jews as belonging to the synagogue of satan.

C. "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer"

Jesus foretold of the suffering of this period. Jesus encourages the saints not to fear. This is a prophecy of the suffering that was to come to the Church.

D. "the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried"

Many were imprisoned for the sake of the Gospel during this period. It became against the Roman law to be a Christian.

E. "ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. (2:10)

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This is a prophecy of the ten periods of persecution that were to come in the Smyrna period. As these letters to the Seven Churches are compared to the events of Church History you can see the prophetic parallel unfold. There were ten intense periods of persecution at the hands of Roman Emperors. Many Christians gave their lives for the Gospel to receive what is called a martyrs crown.

II. Causes of Imperial Persecutions

A. **Heathen worship was hospitable to new gods while Christianity was exclusive to the worship of the One True God.** New gods were accepted by the heathen culture of Rome. Christians could not condone worship of false gods and would not accept the way of the heathen.

B. **Idol worship was interwoven with life. Images stood in many houses to receive adoration.** Sacrifices were made to gods at festivals. Images were worshipped at civil ceremonies. Christians who took no part in such idolatry were not fitting in with the pagan society.

C. **Emperor Worship.** Christians would not worship the emperor. Christians spoke of another King. Christians were looked upon as being disloyal and plotters of a revolution.

D. **Judaism had been an allowed religion in the Roman Empire.** In the first century Christians had been considered a sect of Judaism, an allowed religion. After the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, Christianity stood alone with no laws to protect them.

E. **Secret Meetings.** The Christians started to meet in secret to protect themselves from persecution. The secret meetings of Christians aroused suspicion. They were accused of meeting in secret to plan an overthrow of the Empire.

F. **Equality in the Church.** Christians looked upon all men as equal, thus destroying the social order of the nobles. This went against the order of Roman society.

G. **Business Interests.** Christianity meant an end to the profitable business of making idols. The craftsmen supported the persecution of the Christians. Acts 19: 24-28.

III. The Stages of Persecution

A. **The church experienced ten periods of intense persecution at the hands of Roman emperors.** "Ye shall have tribulation ten days:" - Rev. 2:10 Christianity was outlawed during all of the second and third centuries. There was tremendous persecution in the opening years of the fourth century, until the year AD 313 when *The Edict of Constantine* was issued.

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B. In AD 303. the Emperor Diocletian began the tenth and fiercest persecution of Christians that is called “The Great Persecution.” This was an attempt to remove Christianity from the face of the earth. It is said that Diocletian erected a pillar inscribed: *In honour of the extirpation of the Christian superstition.* Many Christians were burned alive for their testimony. Christians were eaten by wild beasts in the arena. The beasts became sick of human flesh and would no longer attack. Soldiers became weary of killing helpless, unarmed people and threw their swords away.

IV. Leaders of the Persecuted Church

A. **Ignatius** was bishop of Antioch in Syria. He had been a pupil of the Apostle John that became A powerful preacher of the Gospel.

B. **Justin Martyr** had been a philosopher, and continued teaching after his conversion. He wrote several books which are still in existence that give us much information about this period. One of his prominent works is Dialogue With Trypho, a treatise refuting the Judiazers. (Rev. 2:9)

C. **Polycarp** was bishop of Smyrna at Asia Minor. He was taught as a youth by the Apostle John. He was mighty messenger to his generation.

D. **Ireneus** was a student of Polycarp. He became bishop of Lyons (In Gaul) in AD 177. He stressed the fundamental Christian doctrines which were facing opposition from the Gnostics. Some of his writings still survive today.

V. Prominent Martyrs

A. **Simeon** was James’ successor as head of the Jerusalem church. He was crucified by order of the Roman governor of Palestine in AD 107 during Trajan’s reign.

B. **Ignatius** was thrown to the wild beasts in the Coliseum. Standing in the arena as the lions approached him, Ignatius prayed:
“I thank Thee O Lord, that Thou hast vouchsafed thus to honour me. I am God’s grain, to be Ground between the teeth of wild beasts, so that I may become a holy loaf for the Lord.”

C. **Polycarp** was called upon by the Roman governor to deny Christ and threatened to burn him alive, and Polycarp answered:
“Eighty and six years have I served Christ, and He has done me no wrong; how then can I blaspheme my King who has saved me? You

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threaten the fire that burns for an hour and then is quenched; but you know not of the fire of the judgement to come, and not of the fire of the eternal punishment. Bring what you will."

He was then burned to death in Smyrna in AD155.

D. **Justin Martyr** was beheaded at Rome in AD167. His last words were:

"I am a Christian, having been freed by Christ, and by the grace of Christ, I partake of the same hope."

E. **Blandina** was a Christian slave girl who was tortured from morning until night declared: *"I am a Christian, and no evil is committed among us."*

F. **Perpetua and Felicitas**. A noble lady in Carthage, Perpetua, and her slave Felicitas were killed by wild beasts in AD 203.

VI. Formation of the New Testament Canon

A. The word canon means a rod, rule or measuring device.

B. Refers to the Biblical books that were judged to be of Divine origin (inspired - *God breathed*) and included as part of THE BIBLE.

C. No precise date can be given for the full recognition of the New Testament Canon, but it cannot be placed earlier than AD 300.

VII. False Teaching Arose During this Period

A. **Gnostics** taught that people could be saved by secret knowledge. (*Gnosis* is a greek word for *knowledge*.)

B. **Ebionites/Judiazers** continued in the ceremonial Law of Moses, and were trying to influence others to do the same.

VIII. Condition of the Church

A. The church was purified through persecution.

B. There was a unity among the brethren.

C. The persecuted church was a growing church. The devil sought to destroy Christianity through persecution, but persecution only served to fan the flame of Christianity as the Gospel spread throughout the known world.

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Three: The Imperial Church

(AD 313 - 476) From the Edict of Constantine - To the Fall of Rome.

I. Mixture and Pergamos

Pergamos means married. - The church was infiltrated by paganism, and became married to the world. - Rev. 2:12-17. This infiltration of paganism would be the beginning of what would become the Roman Catholic Church.

A. **“Dwellest where satan’s seat is” - v.13** The Emperor’s throne was in Rome. The popes would rule out of Rome. The popes sat in satan’s seat of authority to rule the Roman Catholic Church. The word Imperial means autocratic rule which is a ruler with absolute power or authority.

B. **The doctrine of Balaam. - v. 14** Balaam cast a stumbling block before Israel. He gave council to entice Israel to sin. - Num. 31:16. The Scripture refers to him teaching Israel to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication. This Scripture is describing the events that would take place in the Imperial Church period. Balaam was already dead at the time when John received the Book of Revelation in AD 100. The Scripture is referring to the false doctrine spirit associated with Balaam that would be prevalent in this church period. The eating of things sacrificed to idols is in reference to the Roman Catholic wafer that was eaten by the Catholics and sacrificed each week in the mass.

C. **Doctrine of Nicolaitans. - v. 15** Remember the word Nicolaitanes means to rule over the laity. This Scripture is in reference to the Romanist clergy who ruled harshly over the people.

II. Constantine

A. **Constantine’s Cross.** He battled Maxentius for the throne at the Battle of Milvan Bridge. (AD312) Constantine was outnumbered by the army of Maxentius who also wanted the throne. The winner of this battle would be the next Emperor of Rome. Constantine claimed to have a vision of a cross, inscribed with the words: “ In this *sign* conquer.” Constantine made *this cross* the symbol of his army, and had it placed on the shields of his men. Archeological evidence shows us *this cross* was the Egyptian ankh which is a cross with a loop on top. The ankh is the symbol for the sun god Ra. Baal is the sun god that was worshipped in the O.T. Constantine won the battle and

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became the Emperor of Rome. He was used of the devil to combine Christianity with baal worship. The cross he stood for was not the cross of Christianity, but the ankh of baal worship.

B. Constantine made a profession of faith and a supposed conversion to Christianity. Many Christian historians have doubted the sincerity of his profession. Constantine continued to worship the sun god under the guise of Christianity. This mixing of paganism with Christianity would later become Roman Catholicism.

C. Edict of Toleration. AD 313 (Edict of Constantine). An Edict is an official decree or document. This Edict granted freedom to all religions in the Empire ending the Roman persecution of Christianity. It restored to Christians property that had been seized during Diocletian's reign. Satan changed his tactics from persecution to infiltration.

D. Constantine was the first historical pope. Constantine took the title of *Pontifex Maximus*, which is still the official title of the pope today. Peter was not the first pope. Paul's greeting to the Roman Church does not mention Peter as being there in Rome. – Rom. 16:1-15 Don't you think if Peter was there leading the Roman Church as the Catholics claim he was that Paul would have made mention of him in his greeting to the Roman Church. The book of Acts places Peter in Jerusalem when the church began. Peter was at the council of Jerusalem in AD 48. He was in Jerusalem not Rome.

III. Results of Toleration of the Church

A. The persecution of Christians ended. Many people were deceived, and accepted another gospel of compromise. Christianity that flourished under persecution became worldly under government acceptance.

B. Churches seized during persecution were restored. New churches were built. The Roman *basilica* became the pattern for elegant church buildings. The *Basilica* was a courtroom in the shape of a rectangle divided into isles by rows of pillars with a semi-circular platform at one end with seats for the officials. This is still the pattern today in the Roman Catholic Church. An example of this style of architecture is St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

C. The official sacrifices ceased. The Roman citizens were no longer required to make sacrifices to pagan gods.

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D. Churches were supported by the state. The temples of the gods had been supported by the public treasury. This money was now given to the churches and the clergy.

E. Clergy received special privileges. The Clergy became a wealthy class. Men desired these positions for the monetary gain and power associated with the position. Salvation was no longer a requirement to be part of the Clergy. Evil men were ruling the Roman Church.

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F. Baal worship was introduced into the Church. Pergamos means *married*. The church became married to paganism. Baal worship of the sun god would become the false worship of the Roman Catholic Church. According to tradition Nimrod established the pagan cult of baal worship. Semiramis Nimrod's mother who would marry her son became the "queen of heaven". Nimrod was supposed to have been reincarnated into baal, the sun god.

1. Baal the sun god and Ashteroth "the queen of heaven" were worshipped in the Old Testament. - Judges 2:13, 10:16, I Sam. 7:14, 12:10. Cakes were made to the "queen of heaven"- Jer. 7:18, 44:17-19. You can see the parallel between the cakes and the catholic wafer. Mary is still referred to as the queen of heaven in the Roman Catholic Church today.

2. Incense was also used in baal worship and is used today in Roman Catholicism.

3. Mother - infant idols (statues) became the representation of this pagan cult of baal worship. The catholic statues of Mary and the baby Jesus look exactly like these ancient pagan idols. The idols even had halos which were a pagan symbol of the sun god. Today in the Roman Catholic Church you can find statues of Mary and the baby Jesus adorned with these pagan halos. The artifacts of these ancient idols show the connection between baal worship and Roman Catholicism.

4. The cult spread around the world. This false religion was taken with the people after the dispersion of Babel. This idol worship spread from empire to empire and was passed down throughout the ages. The following Empires worshipped baal the sun god and the queen of heaven. Each Empire changed the religion slightly, yet the common worship of the queen of heaven was still evident.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Egypt - Isis and Horus the sun god. | • Greece - Aphrodite and Zeus. |
| • Babylon - Ishtar and Marduk. | • Rome - Venus and Jupiter. |
| • Persia - Astarte | • Ephesus - Diana |

IV. Fall of the Western Roman Empire.

A. Constantine chose the Greek city of Byzantium for the new Capital and renamed it Constantinople. - AD 330. This increased the influence of the Roman bishop. The capital was now far away from Rome and the Empire was already in collapse. After Constantine's death the Roman bishop became the Pope.

B. The division of the Empire soon followed the building of the new Capital. One Emperor could no longer protect his vast domain. The Adriatic Sea formed a natural barrier between the two divisions

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of the Empire. In AD 395 The Empire was split into the Eastern and Western Empires.

C. The Western Empire with Rome as its Capital survived until AD 476.

D. The Eastern Empire with Constantinople as its Capital survived until AD 1453. This would become the Holy Roman Empire of the Middle Ages. (AD 500 - 1500)

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V. Christian Leaders of the Period

A. Athanasius (AD 296-373)

He was a defender of the faith in the Arian controversy. Arius the leader of this false teaching did not believe in the Biblical doctrine of The Trinity. He became bishop of Alexandria in AD 325. He was exiled five times for his stand against Rome.

B. John Chrysostom (AD 345-407)

He was referred to as "the golden mouth," because of his eloquence as a speaker. He was a mighty preacher, a statesman, and an able expositor of the Bible. He became bishop of Constantinople in AD 398. He was banished, for his stand for truth, and died in exile.

C. Augustine (AD 354-430)

He became bishop of Hippo in North Africa in AD 395. He was a Chief defender of the faith in the Pelagian Controversy. This false teaching was promoted by Pelagius who did not believe in original sin. Augustine developed a reputation as a preacher, teacher, and writer.

D. Even though these men were a part of the Roman Church, they stood for the faith.

The exiles of these men indicate they were not popular with the Roman Church leaders. The Roman Church would eventually force out anyone that opposed their pagan lies.

Four: The Medieval Church

(AD 476 - 1453) From the fall of Rome to the fall of Constantinople.

I. The Medieval Church was Characterized by Thyatira - 2:18-21

- A. The “continual sacrifice” of mass was part of the seduction of this period.

Roman Catholic doctrine states that Christ instituted the Eucharist as an atoning or propitiatory work.

*“The victim is one and the same:...only the manner of offering is different. And since in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and offered in an unbloody manner... **this sacrifice is truly propitiatory**” (Doctrina de ss. Missae sacrificio, c. 2, quoted in Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1367).[Christ instituted the Eucharist.] He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until he should come again. (1992 Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church)*

Thyatira means *continual sacrifice*. This refers to the Roman Catholic mass or Eucharistic celebration. The mass became a *continual sacrifice* for the living and the dead. Roman Catholic doctrine claims that the wafer and wine literally turn into the body and blood of Jesus and must be “perpetually offered” until His return for there to be atonement for sin. Although they would rather say that mass is not so much a ‘continual sacrifice’ as a ‘perpetual representing’ of the blood and body of Christ, they in practice denounce the sufficiency and sovereignty of Christ’s work on the cross in requiring any further work. We by faith receive the atoning work of Christ because his sacrificial death was sufficient. The keeping of the Lord’s supper is not an atoning work or **propitiatory**, but is a memorial feast and act of obedience. Jesus offered Himself once and for all (Heb. 7:27) and his death and resurrection are **memorialized** in communion. There is no propitiation necessary beyond Christ’s ministry on the cross.

- B. The spirit that Jezebel carried seduced many Believers to idolatry and fornication.

Revelation 2:20—...*thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.*

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Notice it is the servants of Jesus who are being taught and seduced to commit fornication and idolatry.

Queen Jezebel was already dead at the time of this writing. This Scripture refers to the seductive and false worship spirit of Jezebel and not specifically the O.T. queen.

C. There was a faithful remnant in this period.- v. 19

Revelation 2:24—... *unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine...*

Some in this church period were involved in good works of charity, service and faith, and were not a part of the Roman Catholic Church. There were several groups of people who were following The Word of God.

II. The Medieval Church was Covered by Darkness

Isaiah 9:19—*Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is the land darkened,*

Roughly, the period from the 5th to 15th century is referred to as the “Dark Ages.”

A. Civilization and civility came to a halt.

1. There was little or no advancement in literature, art, and science. There was much poverty and superstition filled the land. Barbarians raided Europe and killed many people. There were many people killed by the bubonic plague that swept the entire continent.

2. The light of God's Word was taken from the people. The dark ages were brought about directly by taking the Bible away from the people. The Roman church taught that only the priests could interpret the Bible. The common people were forbidden to read the Bible. The Bible was either in the original languages or in Latin which few people could understand even if they had wanted to read it for themselves.

3. The people were kept in darkness. The mass was said in Latin which no one could understand. Truth and science were suppressed by the Catholic Church. Galileo, the man who invented the telescope, was almost killed because what he observed through his telescope went against the official position of the Pope who was supposed to be infallible.

B. The Roman Catholic Church dominated Europe.

1. The leaders of the church were immoral.

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2. A church of idolatry and paganism controlled Europe throughout this period.

C. The Inquisition.

1. A special court set up in the 1200's to deal with the heretics. Anyone who disagreed with The Roman Catholic Church was deemed a heretic. The heretics were hunted down and brought to trial by the Catholics.

2. Many Christians were brutally killed and tortured. Accused heretics were asked if the wafer turned into the literal body and blood of Jesus. This question became the test of loyalty to the Roman Church. True Christians who answered negative to this question were killed as heretics.

D. The Holy Wars which are also called *The Crusades* lasted from 1095-1291 AD.

1. These wars were an attempt by the Roman Church to retake the Holy Land from the Muslims. Rome convinced political rulers of Europe to lead the Crusades. The Muslims were gaining power in Europe. The Catholics wanted to drive the Muslims out of Jerusalem and reclaim the city for the pope.

2. The crusaders failed to free the Holy Land from the dominion of the Mohammedans.

III. The Medieval Church was Contrasted by Saints

A. There were remnant groups in this period that were not part of the Roman Church.

1. **The Albigenes** were located in Albi, France. They believed the New Testament provided the authority of their faith. They opposed the pope and the Roman Church. The Albigenes were fiercely persecuted by Pope Innocent III in 1208.

2. **The Waldensians** were located in France, Italy, and Switzerland. They were named after their leader Peter Waldo who had the Bible translated into the people's language. Waldo taught that Scripture is the authority of Christians. Their slogan was: *The Word of God speaks, and we ought to obey it*. The Waldensians were greatly persecuted by the Roman Church.

B. Prominent leaders of the period.

1. **John Wycliffe (1330-1384)** was the first to translate The Bible into English. He is referred to as the Morning Star of the Reformation. He stood against the Roman Church, and rejected the

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authority of the Pope. He would have been killed by the Catholics had it not been for the protection of the English nobles. Wycliffe's preaching and Bible translation prepared the way for The Reformation. The Catholics hated him so much his body was dug up and desecrated years after his death.

2. **John Huss** (1369-1315) had been a reader of Wycliffe's writings and stood for the truth of the Word of God. He strongly opposed the Authority of the Pope and the lies of Romanism. He was condemned as a heretic and burned at the stake by a council of the Roman Catholic Church.

Five: The Reformed Church

(AD 1453 - 1678) From the fall Constantinople to the end of the *Thirty Year War*.

I. The Remnant

Sardis implies a *remnant*. - Rev. 3:1-6.

A. *Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.*
v. 2

Jesus was encouraging the Church to be alert and hang on to what remnant of the things of God were still left before they died out.

B. *Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, hold fast, and repent.* v. 3

They were told to remember and hold on to the truth they had received and to repent which means to turn around.

C. *Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments.* v. 4

There was still a remnant standing against the Roman Church. This was a period when God raised up men to shine the light against the darkness of the Roman Church.

II. The Renaissance

A. The Light of Learning

The Renaissance is a term that refers to the awakening of Europe to an interest in literature, art and science. These are things associated with civilization.

B. THE LIGHT OF GOD'S WORD

The Word of God brought Europe out of the dark ages. It is not a coincidence that civilization was restored when the light of God's Word was also restored to the people.

The printing press was invented by Gutenberg in 1456 and **THE FIRST BOOK PRINTED WAS THE BIBLE!** Bibles could now be mass produced and placed in the hands of the common people because of this invention.

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C. The Light of Truth

The moveable type printing press became a powerful tool of *The Reformation*. The reformers printed books and pamphlets teaching against the lies of Romanism and the truths of justification by faith. These new pamphlets gained in popularity and were circulated throughout Europe. Books had to be hand copied by scribes before the printing press was invented, but now books could be circulated quickly. People could read for themselves and make decisions based on fact and not on the lies of Romanism.

III. The Reformation

A. Change within the Catholic Church

Reform means *to amend, change or improve*. Reformers were trying to bring change to the church. Some of these reformers did not realize that the Roman Catholic Church was not going to change. They stood against the false teaching of Romanism. They were restoring the Bible into the languages of the people. The Catholic Church strongly opposed laymen reading the Bible. Those who stood for truth were persecuted and began to realize the false Church of Rome was not going to change.

B. Changing from **DARKNESS TO LIGHT**.

People received the truth of salvation when they began to read the Bible for themselves. The light of the Gospel was driving back the darkness of Romanism. God was turning on the light to end the dark ages.

IV. The Reformers

God raised up torchbearers throughout the world to restore the light of the Gospel. Protestant is the name given to those who protested the Catholic Church.

A. Reformers in Europe

1. **Martin Luther (1483-1546) - Germany**

Martin Luther is considered to be: The father of the Reformation.

He nailed 95 theses to the oaken door of the Wittenberg Cathedral on Oct. 31, 1517. The theses stated his position against the

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Roman Church. He refuted the false doctrine of Romanism and denied the infallibility of the pope. Printed copies quickly flooded Europe and helped to spark the light of the Reformation.

He burned the papal bull. Bull is derived from the Latin *bula* which means a seal. The name being applied to any document stamped with an official seal. In 1520, the pope sent Luther a bull accusing him of heresy. Luther burned the bull in the yard of the University of Wittenberg. Luther called it: "the execrable bull of antichrist". This obviously did not go over well with the pope.

Luther was called to the Diet at Worms. A Diet is a council of rulers. In June of 1521, Luther was called before an imperial diet at Worms in Germany. Luther had been guaranteed safe passage by the German nobles to and from the council. He was commanded to recant by the Roman church leaders. Luther replied: *Unless I am convinced by proofs from Scriptures or by plain and clear reasons and arguments, I can and will not retract, for it is neither safe nor wise to do anything against conscience. Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen.*

Luther was secluded to Wartburg Castle for one year. He was arrested and confined for his safety by the nobles. He translated the N. T. and part of the O.T. into the German language of his people.

2. **Ulrich Zwingli** (1484-1531) - Switzerland.

He published works against the Catholics. He was killed in civil war and John Calvin carried on the work.

3. **John Calvin** (1509-1564) - France/Switzerland

John Calvin was an outspoken preacher and author who preached Salvation by faith. He stressed the authority of Scripture. Calvin misinterpreted Scripture and taught the predestination of the elect. This teaching which is contrary to the Bible became to be known as Calvinism.

4. **Jacques Lefevre** (1455-1536) - France.

He wrote a book called Justification by faith (1512) and preached salvation by faith. The Protestants in France were called Huguenots. The Huguenots were greatly persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church. Twenty thousand Protestants were killed by the Catholics in one day on Aug. 14, 1572 on what was referred to as the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre. Many protestant leaders were killed in this massacre. Five hundred thousand Protestants fled the country for their own safety.

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B. Reformers in England & Scotland

1. **John Wycliffe** (c.1320-1384) - England

John Wycliffe had already made an impact on England. The Wycliffe Bible was in the hands of the people. His teachings had spread across England. The Light of The Word in the hands of the people provided fertile ground for the Reformation in England.

2. **Puritans & Separatists** - England

King Henry VIII (1491-1547) drove the *Roman Catholic Church* out of England and formed the *Church of England*. The *Church of England* then became the official state church. Ministers and churches were then required to be licensed by the state. It was this English Church that caused problems for the Christians in England. The persecution was not as severe as that of the Catholics in Europe, but those who opposed the official State Church were called *dissenters*. Many of these dissenters especially the non-licensed preachers were put into prison. There were two groups that formed among the dissenters. Separatists were those who wanted to separate from the Church of England. Puritans were those who wanted to purify the Church of England.

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3. **John Bunyan** (1628-1688) - England

John Bunyan was a powerful preacher of the Gospel among the dissenters. He preached salvation by grace through faith in Jesus. Bunyan preached without State sanction and spent 12 years in jail for preaching the Gospel. He wrote Pilgrim's Progress while he was in jail which is still in print today.

4. **John Knox** (c.1510-1572) - Scotland

He stood strong against Catholicism. Knox fervent prayer became: *Give me Scotland, or I die*. He strongly opposed Mary Queen of Scots who was a Roman Catholic. He led parliament to outlaw the Catholic mass in 1560. The Protestant Church in Scotland called the Presbyterian Church became the official state church in 1567.

C. Reformers in the New World

The **Pilgrims** who came to the New World were **Separatists** from England. They landed in the New World in the fall of 1620. They came for religious freedom from the oppression of the Church of England. They formed the Mayflower Compact which was the first document of self-government of the New World. The Mayflower Compact based upon Biblical principals was the foundation for the Constitution of the U.S.A.

V. The *Reformed Priests* (Jesuits)

Initially known as "reformed priests", the Jesuits travelled with their elected Superior General Ignatius of Loyola to Rome where they offered their services to the pope in October 1538.

Before being dispersed on various missions for Pope Paul III, the pope established a papal bull ***Regimini militantis Ecclesiae*** (Latin for *To the Government of the Church Militant*) declaring official approval of the Jesuits who are still in existence today. The Jesuits led a counter reformation against the Protestants.

CONCLUSION: **GOD TURNED ON THE LIGHT**

- A. The Bible was translated into the common languages
- B. The light of the Word ended the Dark Ages

Six: The Modern Church

(AD 1678 - c.1950) From the end of the *Thirty Year War of 1678 to the 1950's*.

I. The Open Door (3:7-13)

A. A New Chance

I have set before thee an open door. This was a period of great revival and concentrated missionary efforts. The world was an *open door* for missions.

B. An Old Commission

Mark 16:15—*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.* (Matthew 28:19-20)

C. A Renewed Compassion

Philadelphia means *brotherly love*.

II. The Great Awakening - 1700's

The Great Awakening refers to a mighty revival in both England and America.

A. **George Whitefield** (1714-1770)

Mr. Whitefield was a powerful orator of the simple Gospel who at the age of 24 was forbidden to preach in the Church of England. He made the fields his chapel and preached to thousands of people in the open air. This was the beginning of revival in the western part of England. He preached in both England and America.

B. **John Wesley** (1703-1791)

The world was his parish. He preached to thousands of people in the open air. He preached throughout England and America starting many churches. He is the founder of the Methodist Church.

C. **Jonathan Edwards** (1703- 1758)

He became a pastor in Northampton, MA at the age of 17. In 1741 he read his famous sermon entitled *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God* to his congregation. Great conviction fell on the congregation while they were preaching and revival spread throughout New England.

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III. The Second Great Awakening – 1820's

This was another mighty move of God revival fires spread also into England.

A. **Charles Finney** was in the forefront of a great American revival.

In the early 1820's Finney preached Gospel meetings in NY that stirred a second flame of Revival fires. Finney was a man of faith and a fiery evangelist of the Gospel. Finney has been referred to as America's foremost evangelist.

B. **D.L. Moody**

Moody shook America and England for God. He preached the simple Gospel in the common language of the people. It has been estimated that one million souls were saved in his ministry. He founded Moody Bible Institute which is still in existence today.

C. **Charles Spurgeon**

Spurgeon was a Prince of Preachers who was the Pastor of the Metropolitan Baptist Tabernacle in London. He preached 5000-plus people weekly for 40 years.

D. God was restoring the preaching of the cross to the church.

IV. The Modern Missionary Movement

A. **Obstacles to Missions**

Doctrinal beliefs formerly hindered the evangelizing of heathen nations. The Calvinistic doctrines of *predestination* and *election* were common beliefs of the church leading up to and during this period. Heathen nations were believed to be predestined to be damned with no hope of Salvation. It was because of the adherence to this false doctrine that it was thought to be unnecessary to travel to heathen nations.

B. **William Carey** - INDIA

Carey is the father of the modern missionary movement. He formed the first missionary society. He was the first modern missionary that went to a foreign country for the purpose of evangelizing a heathen nation. He was the first missionary to India.

C. **Adoniram Judson** - BURMA

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Judson was the first American overseas missionary. He went to Burma in 1812 to preach the Gospel. He translated the entire Bible into Burmese.

D. **David Livingstone** - AFRICA

He is referred to as the pathfinder of Africa. He pioneered the interior of Africa where white men had never gone before. He established missionary stations and did much to promote the Gospel in Africa.

E. **Hudson Taylor** - CHINA.

He founded China Inland Mission a missionary group that concentrated on spreading the Gospel far into the interior of China. He planted 849 missionaries, and started 205 mission stations.

V. The Azusa Street Revival

- A. A mighty outpouring of the Holy Ghost in Los Angeles California at the turn of the 20th century.
- B. God was restoring Pentecost to the Church.

VI. The Other Notable Preachers

- A. Billy Sunday stood strong against alcohol and was a dynamic preacher of the Gospel.
- B. Smith Wigglesworth was an Apostle of Faith who had a tremendous healing ministry.

VII. The Tent Revivals of the 1950's

- A. Oral Roberts had a tremendous healing ministry and was a powerful messenger of God.
- B. A.A. Alan preached the simple Gospel to the common man. He also had a powerful ministry of healing.
- C. Jack Coe was a man with reckless faith. He would break crutches and throw canes when he prayed for the sick. Jesus manifested His power mightily to heal.
- D. William Branham was a prophet of God. He also had a powerful healing ministry.
- E.

Seven: The Laodicean Church

(AD c.1950 - PRESENT) From the 1950's till the Present Time

I. Church of Lukewarmness & Casting Votes (3: 14-22)

A. The church is described by Jesus as being *lukewarm*.

This is a prophetic description of the current church period. The church as a whole today is in a backslidden condition and does not even know it! The church thinks they are doing well, but Jesus' description of the church today is far from desirable.

Revelation 3:17—*thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and **knowest not** that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*

B. The church is run by the ballot box.

Laodicea means *rule by the people*. Many of the churches today are run by the people. The name of this period describes the government of this period. The church is no longer being led by God instead they are running things themselves and doing things their own way.

II. Church of Liberalism & Compromise

A. New Evangelicals

The term: New Evangelicals was a phrase coined in 1948. This phrase describes those who promoted a modern religion of compromise. There was a new wave of liberalism that crept into the church.

New Evangelicals believe there are errors in the Bible. Some even denied Christ's Deity. They compromised with sin, substituting worldliness for the things of God.

B. Billy Graham became the spokesman for this new wave of liberalism.

He demanded that liberals sponsor crusades alongside the fundamentalists. He started what was called the inclusive policy, which was to include the world rather than to separate from the world. He brought in worldly entertainers to sing gospel songs at the

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crusades. There was a close association with Catholics in the
Crusades. He refers to those in Romanism as our Catholic brothers.

III. Church of Liars & Charisma

The modern charismatic spirit is a false spirit.

A. There is a false anointing – Mt. 24:5

Jesus warned there would be false christs in the last days. The word Christ means *anointed*. There are many today with a false anointing that is not of God.

B. There are false prophets – Mat. 24:11,24

Jesus said there would be false prophets that would deceive many. There are many false prophets today in the charismatic movement. They replace the unction of the Holy Ghost with eloquence and operating under demon power.

C. The charismatic movement came out of the Catholic Church.

The charismatic movement began in the Catholic Church. It was referred to as *charismatic renewal* and had its start in Roman Catholicism. It was a false manifestation of speaking in tongues to those who were still in the false doctrine of Romanism. It is a false religious spirit.

IV. Church of Luxury & Corruption

A. The gospel of prosperity has replaced the Gospel of Jesus Christ in many of our modern churches.

Many in the church today are preaching a prosperity gospel of monetary gain. This is a description of the blab it and grab it mentality of many of our modern day televangelists.

The emphasis is on wealth and monetary gain. Gimmicks are being used to raise money. People are told such slogans as: *plant your seed for your greatest need*. They are told if they give they will receive the hundred fold blessing. They are told to speak their blessing into existence and claim their Cadillac. Some even tell people to talk to their wallets for the purpose of speaking money into them.

B. Gullible Christians swallow up every new fad regardless of truth.

The Book “Jabez Prayer” is full of false doctrine. This book has gained tremendous popularity today by promising untold wealth and blessing. The prayer is taken out of context and used as a mantra to command God to pour out His blessings.

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C. Making Merchandise of the Gospel

CONCLUSION: The church is in a lukewarm condition. .

A. Much of the church is asleep.

B. There is much worldliness and compromise in the churches today.

Summary

SEVEN PERIODS OF THE CHURCH

I. THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH - *Ephesus* - “desirable”

From the Day of Pentecost AD 30
To the completion of the N.T. about AD 100

II. THE PERSECUTED CHURCH - *Smyrna* - “crushed”

From the completion of the N.T. about AD 100 AD
To the Edict of Constantine 313 AD

III. THE IMPERIAL CHURCH - *Pergamos* - “married”

From the Edict of Constantine AD 313
To the Fall of Rome AD 476

IV. THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH - *Thyatira* - “continual sacrifice”

From the Fall of Rome AD 476
To the Fall of Constantinople AD 1453

V. THE REFORMED CHURCH - *Sardis* - “remnant”

From the Fall of Constantinople AD 1453
To the End of the Thirty Year War AD 1678

**VI. THE MODERN CHURCH - *Philadelphia* -
“brotherly love”**

From the end of the Thirty Year War AD 1678
To the Twentieth Century c. AD 1950's

**VII. THE LAODICEAN CHURCH - *Laodicea* - “rule by
the people”**

From the Twentieth Century c. AD 1950's
To the Present Day